solidated" during this period. There was law and order. The 642
foreign visitors who came to Budapest found a clean and beautiful city. The police were polite. The gentlemen who eagerly invited the foreigners to their homes spoke excellent English and French. They smoked English cigarettes and most of them wore suits made of English materials. It was a pleasure to hunt with them. An English lord no doubt felt quite at home in the spacious county residences of our lords. He never went behind the stables, where we lived. . . . How we lived, and still live, we gave you some idea in the first chapter of this book.

But life in Hungary was not exactly as charming and nice as the stray Britisher saw it.

Count Stephen Bethlen, the successor of the "black Count" Andrássy, who was for eleven years Prime Minister of the country, inaugurated the first fascist dictatorship in Europe, even before that of Mussolini. He did it very cleverly. He did not abolish the parliamentary system. He paid lip service to a "qualified de- [641]
mocracy", believing that we, the people, were not ready for political rights. Only 25% of the rural population had a right to vote.[1]

Instead of describing the Bethlen election system in so many learned words, let us tell you how we saw it at that time.

Let's say that to-morrow is election day. Those fortunates 666
among us who have paid all their taxes, who can prove that in 1918–19 they did not take part in any political activities, who are more than twenty-six and who can prove that they went to school and have lived for six years in the same place—well, they have a right to vote. To-morrow they can go to the election committee and say openly, in the presence of the gendarmerie commandant, the district commissioner and the village mayor, that they vote against the government. For doing this one is usually punished. Next year you pay a higher tax, you will not be able to borrow the village threshing machine, and so on and so forth.

Still, several hundreds of us are determined to vote against the government.

The gendarmerie arranges special "traffic regulations" in the village. The pro-government voters must gather in Oxmarket square, the opposition voters in Haymarket square.

The voting begins. First the pro-government people are permitted to vote. Then the opposition. If there is a danger that the government candidate will not get enough votes, the gendarmes simply make new traffic regulations and close the way between Haymarket square and the election-building.

It is all quite simple.

How did the opposition nevertheless get some votes? Well,

1 [In the 1920-1939 period -- Analyst]

665 They defended themselves by saying:

642 1. They concluded this agreement with Bethlen's Government. That government might go, and then labour would be
423 free to act.

2. This was a tactical step to save the existence of the Party and the Trade Unions.

3. Even during the period of voluntary passivity, industrial labour could go on organising and educating its own masses.

4. The land-workers were a backward, uneducated mass.

We do not want to pass judgment. We know that the peasants are a conservative lot. We know that the landless land-workers are often called peasants, thereby confusing the industrial workers, who dislike peasants. But the fact remains that the Bethlen–Peyer agreement was one of the most important pillars supporting the camouflaged dictatorship of Hungarian feudalism.

423 Our lords had other tricks up their sleeve. They even pretended to carry out some land reform. This trick also worked. Horthy
565 created a new Hungarian knighthood, the so-called "Order of Heroes". Officially all those Hungarians who had fought exceedingly well in the war of 1914–18 could become "heroes". In fact, all the White Terrorist boys were knighted, all the members of Horthy's White Army, all the friends and servants of our lords. About fifty thousand other ranks received some land which had been taken away from "traitors" like Count Károlyi and his friends. In this way Bethlen could say to the Allies that he was carrying out land reform, and he also had a trustworthy defence guard for his régime.

The gentry were an important pillar of the Horthy–Bethlen rule. *The gentry are usually landowners in theory but not in practice.*
565 They wear a signet ring with the family emblem on it, and have the manners and customs of a country squire, a lot of dissatisfaction, an empty pocket and a great craving for a rich, elegant life. They are—or pretend to be—members of a noble landowning family which lost its estates because of "them". "They" vary quite a lot. "They" are the Jews, "they" are the progressives, "they" are those red skunks who brought in a law forcing the nobility to pay taxes.

We have already mentioned that Hungary had a decentralised
●641 administration and that the counties—"the noble counties"—
647 had a lot of power. The gentry—the gentlemen—were the Civil Servants of the State or county. Trade or industry or any profession was naturally considered below the dignity of the gentry.

2:Paloczy-Horvath H-3 (no date)1944 EC1 Hungary EC1

641 Well, Count Bethlen "consolidated" his rule chiefly with their
647 help. He forced the country to give armchair jobs to most of the gentry. You want proof? *Pre-1914 Hungary had less Civil Servants than post-Trianon Hungary.* Hungary's territory was reduced by 72%, her population by 64%, but instead of reducing the Civil Service, Count Bethlen *increased* it by at least two-thirds.

641 *We* paid the taxes; why should he care? The landowners
651 were protected. The great landowners paid 7.62 *pengoes* per acre, the smallholders 12 *pengoes* per acre. The workers in the factories and on the land paid, proportionately to their income, 22% more tax than the rich.

So, as you see, the Horthy–Bethlen régime not only abolished all the reforms, but quite effectively ensured that we should not get any help from inside or from abroad.

We were beaten, and our lords were safe. They set to work to wreck our future too. They called Hungary a "kingless kingdom". You can make funny jokes about it, but this phrase, too, was a trick of our lords. By calling Hungary a kingdom, they meant that the peace treaties were not valid. Only the king, with St. Stephen's crown on his head, could make a treaty. This meant that Hungary would have to get back her thousand-year-old frontiers.

CHAPTER XII

Let us tell you now what we think about this problem of St. Stephen's frontiers. Listen, please, because you will never achieve peace in our part of the world unless you see clearly the rôle of our lords.

Your rich people talk about "the white man's burden" in Africa and India. Well, our lords could talk in the same way about the "white count's burden". It is very simple. The white count's burden is to rule the Danube basin; to rule the despised workers in Hungary, Rumania, Croatia; to rule a lot of Slavs and Germans. Why should he rule them? Because the "white counts" are infinitely better than anybody else in the Danube basin.

We think that we shall only have peace if we all accept the fact that we are neither better nor worse than our neighbours, and that we must live side by side with them on the *basis of equality of opportunity, right and obligation.* Well, our lords will never acknowledge that a Rumanian or Czech lord is just as good as they are.

Our lords are a proud lot. They like to be important. They think and talk all the time about the Hungary of a thousand

3:Kemeny G-5 (1945-48)1954 EC1 Hungary EC1

to merge the two drafts without great difficulties as the Communist Plan was also adapted in its structure to the system of mixed economy.

The Socialist Plan included gross capital outlay of roughly 6,700 million forint. Replacements being some 1,600 million, the net capital outlay would be 5,100 million. The Government Plan, following rather the Communist Plan, included a net capital outlay of 6,585 million, but did not reckon in its estimates with the burden loaded on the national income by the necessity of accumulating stocks. The Socialist Plan laid less emphasis on heavy industry and contemplated a more rapid extension of light industry than the Government Plan.

Besides capital outlay the Socialist Plan estimated that the other form of capital formation, the replenishment and extension of stocks, would need 6,500 million. Towards the total net investment of 11,600 million, it was hoped that about 2,000 million would be financed by foreign loans, leaving about 9,600 million to be raised at home.

The Government Plan looked forward to a more considerable improvement in the productivity of labour than the Socialist Plan, and therefore did not reckon on so great an increase in numbers employed.

LEGAL POWERS TO ENFORCE THE PLAN

It was by the Act of July 1947 for the Implementation of the Three-year Plan that economic planning as from 1 August of that year was introduced in Hungary. The six clauses of the Act ordered amongst other things: 'Every Hungarian national in Hungary and every foreign national having a working permit in Hungary shall be required by the Government, within the limits of the decrees issued on the basis of the present Act, to carry the Plan into effect'. Clause III authorized the Government to establish a Planning Board and a National Planning Department for the elaboration of the Plan and for controlling the work of carrying it into effect. It may be mentioned that the Planning Board never acquired a leading role. It was but an inter-departmental advisory body.[1] The power of decision was vested in the Supreme Economic Council, and the National Planning Department wielded the executive power. The Government also were empowered to determine by decree the penalties for any breach of the regulations issued in pursuance of the Plan. Jurisdiction over such offences was given to a special court with accelerated procedure.

[1] See Chapter IX.

727 destroyed, while Debrecen, bulwark of Hungarian Calvinism,
659 lay in ruins, including the famous Great Church. The 700-years-old Calvinist College remained intact and the Provisional National Assembly held its first meeting within its walls. We
[563] learned that the Jews were last put to work on fortifications at Budapest and Vienna. A strong protest was made to Regent Horthy against the inhuman deportations. Under ecclesiastical pressure these were discontinued after July 1, but they were resumed under Szálasi, who ordered not only Jews but everyone unfriendly to Hitlerism to be deported. Szálasi and the Gestapo began proceedings against all Calvinist priests who raised their voices on behalf of the persecuted Jews. The 400-years-old College of Sárospatak succeeded in preserving the Jews' wealth, school-books and ecclesiastical robes."

[668] Nevertheless, from the end of 1942, when a united front against Horthy had been formed which opposed the war against the Soviet Union, it had included Catholic laity if not clergy, and Protestants, and when the first National Assembly met again in the Calvinist College in Debrecen in 1944 the Provisional Government had extremely strong Protestant backing, particularly from the Calvinists, who provided one of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly.

Liberation and After

After the Liberation the church situation in Hungary rapidly crystallised. To understand it, three points need to be noted:

1059 The first is the attitude of the Government, which is effectively
[641] summed up in the Constitution adopted by the National Assembly on August 18, 1949, Article 54 of which states:—

1. "The Hungarian People's Republic guarantees the freedom of conscience of the citizens and the right to exercise their religion freely."

2. "In order to be able to assure freedom of conscience the Hungarian People's Republic separates Church from State."

To this might be added an extract from a speech made by the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Rákosi, on April 25, 1948, at the time of the controversy on the nationalisation of schools:—

"I must speak of one of the unsolved problems of democracy, that of relations between democracy and the Church. As everybody knows, Hungarian democracy stands for the most complete freedom of religion. Communists especially have voiced this since the first moment of the Liberation; and, of course, we have not only voiced it but have also lived up to it. Even to-day we do not think otherwise. In this connection allow me to mention one fact. For May 1 we shall provide bronze for casting church bells for 778 parishes. In so doing the Government is fulfilling a promise made for the centenary* year.

* Centenary of the 1848 revolution, which sought to obtain Hungary's independence from Austria.

194 of atomic weapons and therefore considers the Government 208 which first uses the atom bomb as guilty of a crime against humanity.

II

[641] 1. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic, 659 in accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic, ensures absolute freedom of religion to the Catholic congregations, and also ensures freedom of activity to the Catholic Church.

[871] 2. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic approves the return of eight church schools (six boys' schools and two girls' schools) to the Catholic Church and will also see that in all these Catholic schools there are an adequate number of male and female teachers belonging to the religious orders.

3. The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic will provide for the financial needs of the Catholic Church in the spirit already agreed with other religious denominations in such a way that for 18 years, *i.e.*, until the Catholic Church can cover its financial needs from its own resources, it will grant sums decreasing in a proportion every three and five years respectively. Within the framework of the financial aid the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic will lay special stress on ensuring a suitable living wage for the clergy.

To carry out the above agreement a mixed committee shall be formed composed of delegates of the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic and the Bench of Bishops.

Visit to Hungary

A visit to Hungary in the autumn of 1950 provided an opportunity to meet a number of Hungary's church leaders and to get a personal impression of the situation as it is to-day, and it should be said at once that the result was one overall general and inescapable conclusion: that Hungary's church leaders and church people were not perpetually preoccupied with the question of Church-State relations but with making the best provision for dealing with the overwhelming opportunities to do their proper work which were now open to them.

It was typical of the situation that glancing at the local press in the historic Calvinist town of Debrecen there should appear in prominent positions two statements from leaders of the Reformed Church, on this occasion saying that they gladly took part in the local elections because they wanted to support peace and demo-
[563] cracy and the abolition of exploitation. Debrecen also has a Jewish paper.

Article 44.

642 693 Public prosecutors proceed independently of the central and local administrative and executive organs of the state.

SECTION EIGHT

The Rights and Duties of Citizens.

Article 45.

642 641 1) The Hungarian People's Republic guarantees for its citizens the right to work and the right to remuneration in accordance with the quantity and quality of the work done.

2) This right is implemented by the Hungarian People's Republic by means of the planned development of the forces of production and by a manpower policy based on economic planning.

Article 46.

642 466 1) The Hungarian People's Republic ensures the right of rest and recreation for its citizens.

2) This right is implemented by the Hungarian People's Republic by means of a legally determined working day, holidays with pay and the organization of the rest and recreation of the workers.

Article 47.

642 745 1) The Hungarian People's Republic protects the health of the workers and assists them in the event of sickness or disability.

2) The Hungarian People's Republic implements this protection and assistance by means of a comprehensive social insurance scheme and the organization of medical services.

Article 48.

642 871 1) The Hungarian People's Republic ensures the right to education for every worker.

2) The Hungarian People's Republic implements this right by means of an extension to all of educational facilities, by means of a free and compulsory general schooling scheme, by the provision of secondary and higher schools, by educational facilities for adult workers and by financial aid to those receiving schooling of any kind.

Article 49.

1) The citizens of the Hungarian People's Republic are equal before the law and enjoy equal rights. 642 x 641

2) Discrimination of any kind against any citizen on grounds of sex, religion, or nationality is a severely punishable offence.

3) The Hungarian People's Republic ensures to all nationalities living within its borders the possibility of education in their native tongue and the possibility of developing their national culture.

Article 50.

1) In the Hungarian People's Republic women enjoy equal rights with men. 642 x 562

2) The equal rights of women are implemented by the safeguarding of their working conditions on a par with those of men, maternity leave with pay in the event of pregnancy, increased legal protection of mother and child, and a system of maternity and child welfare institutions.

Article 51.

The Hungarian People's Republic protects the institution of marriage and the family. 642 x 594

Article 52.

The Hungarian People's Republic devotes special care to the education and development of the young and accords them special protection. 642 x 855

Article 53.

The Hungarian People's Republic effectively supports all scientific work serving the cause of the working people, as well as the arts which depict the life and struggle of the people and proclaim the victory of the people. It gives every support to the emergence of intellectual workers faithful to the people. 642 x 815 517

Article 54.

1) The Hungarian People's Republic safeguards the liberty of conscience of all citizens and the freedom of religious worship. 642 x 641

2) In order to ensure the liberty of conscience, the Hungarian People's Republic separates the Church from the State. 642 x 659

Article 55.

642 641 1) In accordance with the interests of the worker the Hungarian People's Republic ensures for its citizens freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly.

2) In order to implement these freedoms, the state places at the disposal of the workers the material resources required.

Article 56.

1) In order to develop the social, economic and cultural activities of the workers, the Hungarian People's Republic constitutionally guarantees the right of organization.

2) In fulfilling its tasks, the Hungarian People's Republic bases itself on the organizations of the class-conscious workers. In order to defend the people's democracy, promote participation in socialist construction, widen the scope of cultural and educational work, implement the rights of the people and develop international solidarity, the workers establish trade unions, democratic organizations of women and young people as well as other mass organizations and put into practice the close co-operation and democratic unity of the industrial, agricultural and intellectual workers. The leading force in such political and social activities is the working class, led by its advance guard and supported by the democratic unity of the whole people.

Article 57.

The Hungarian People's Republic safeguards the freedom and inviolability of the person, the privacy of the home and the correspondence of its citizens.

Article 58.

1) The Hungarian People's Republic guarantees these rights and freedoms to all workers living within its borders.

2) Foreign citizens, persecuted for their democratic attitude or their activities in the interests of the liberation of the peoples, enjoy the right of asylum in the Hungarian People's Republic.

Article 59.

It is the fundamental duty of all citizens of the Hungarian People's Republic to defend the property of

the people, consolidate social assets, increase the economic strength of the Hungarian People's Republic, raise the living standard and cultural level of the workers and strengthen the people's democratic system.

Article 60.

Military service is the honorable duty of the citizens of the Hungarian People's Republic in accordance with the law on universal military service.

Article 61.

1) Defence of the home country is the sacred duty of all citizens of the Hungarian People's Republic.

2) Treason, violation of the military oath, desertion to the enemy, espionage and every action detrimental to the military strength of the country, — constituting a betrayal of the cause of the country and of the workers, — is subject to the severest penalties of the law.

SECTION NINE

The Electoral System.

Article 62.

1) Members of Parliament are elected by the citizens of the Hungarian People's Republic on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

2) The elected members are accountable to their constituents.

3) The constituents have the right to recall their elected member of Parliament.

Article 63.

1) All citizens of the Hungarian People's Republic who are of age have the right to vote.

2) Enemies of the working people and those who are unsound of mind are excluded from the suffrage by law.

Article 64.

At elections every citizen entitled to vote has one vote and all votes are equal.

Article 65.

All citizens who have the vote are eligible for election.

Article 66.

Details of the election and recall of members of Parliament are laid down in a special Act of Parliament.

20: Gyorgy S-4 (no date)1947 EC1 Hungary EC1

With the liberation of Hungary came the task of restoring the equilibrium of constitutional life and of basic political institutions. Budapest was still under siege when a new provisional government in Debrecen set about reconstructing the country's political life. In December, 1944, elections for a Provisional National Assembly were held in the liberated territories with decidedly favorable results for the Smallholders and Social Democrats. The new National Assembly swiftly confirmed a Provisional Government which succeeded in keeping itself in political power for about a year, thus bridging the constitutional gap created by the utter political confusion of the first few "post-liberation" months.[4]

In 1945 a new electoral law prepared the way for a decisive national election. The new law assured the right of vote to every Hungarian citizen over the age of twenty, regardless of education, religion, sex or social standing. The first election after the liberation of the country was held under the new electoral law and generally conformed with the recent democratic orientation in offering not only a wide franchise but also a choice among six political parties ranging from Conservative to the ubiquitous Communists. The most significant constitutional step in the establishment of a democracy was undoubtedly the inauguration of a Hungarian Republic.[5] The new Law, No. I-1946, on "Hungary's Form of Government" gives an interesting and forceful background-picture of the new Republic. According to the preamble the power of the State rests with the Hungarian people who exercise their legislative authority through the democratically elected National Assembly. The basic document also states that "the republic guarantees to its citizens the natural and inalienable rights of men." On paper this law unde-

4 This provisional government represented all the parties which had taken part in the national resistance movement up to the time of the collapse of the country after a period of German occupation. A detailed party-breakdown of this provisional government headed by General Béla Miklós of the Hungarian Army, shows the following picture among the members of the Cabinet: 3 Social Democrats, 3 Communists, 2 Smallholders, 2 Conservatives, 2 Army Generals who were members of the first Armistice Commission to Moscow when the Horthy Government, in its last desperation, was negotiating for peace with the Red Army. It is interesting to note that of the two portfolios given the Smallholders Party, one was the all-important Ministry of Foreign Affairs while the portfolios of the Communists included the bases of economic reconstruction, trade, agriculture and communications.

5 A series of conferences and meetings held in January, 1946 among members of Hungary's leading political parties decided on the abolition of the Monarchy and on the establishment of a Hungarian Republic. These decisions were later endorsed by the new Hungarian National Assembly in its first parliamentary sessions. Cf. issues of the Hungarian daily, *Magyar Nemzet*, for January and February, 1946. Also John Haire, "Hungary Today," *New Statesman and Nation*, Nov. 10, 1945, pp. 314-315.

20: Gyorgy S-4 (no date)1947 EC1 Hungary EC1

642 niably contains all the elements inherent in a constitutional, republican, representative democracy. In the words of one writer, they "sound like the Bill of Rights and the Four Freedoms rolled into one,"[6] and include personal freedom, right to a life free from oppression, freedom from fear or want, free expression of thought and opinion, free exercise of religion, freedom of assembly and association, right to personal property, to personal security, to work, to a livelihood, to free education, and the right to participate in the life of the state and in local government.[7]

There are no *constitutional* impediments in Hungary to the "free and unfettered" practice of political democracy, although factual developments have seldom corresponded to legal documents. Governmental powers are satisfactorily outlined in the text of the laws and carefully separated from each other; the National Assembly possesses all legislative power, while executive authority rests with a cabinet of ministers responsible to the Assembly. The President, as head of the Republic, is elected for a four-year term and cannot be reelected successively. The President's official functions are carefully limited by law and include such powers as the appointment of a Prime Minister, confirmation of Cabinet members, and the appointment of diplomatic envoys. The President has the right of vetoing legislation passed by the Assembly, but if the same law is passed again, he is obliged to sign it. He can be impeached by the Assembly for violations of the law or of the constitution.

641 These broad constitutional outlines were subsequently limited by restrictive legislation. A governmental decree, published in June, 1946, provided that the right of supervising political associations shall be exercised by the Minister of the Interior.[8] Simultaneously a law on *The Defense of Hungarian Democracy* defined as criminal any incitement against the republican form of government, against a race or religion, against the equality of all citizens, and in general, any infringement of 687 specific civil liberties. This defense law has since served as the constitu- 727 tional basis for war criminal trials in Hungary. Its provisions were invoked in setting up the juridical procedure for the People's Courts and

6 George A. Lanyi, "Hungary Aims at Liberty For All in Republic," *The Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 5, 1946, pp. 1 and 6.

7 Cf. Public Law No. I, officially published on May 27, 1946, under the title of *Act on the Protection of Human Rights*; official translation by *Hungarian Legal News Service*, Budapest, Aug. 1, 1946.

8 Decree 7300/1946 M.E., published June 28, 1946, H.G. 144.